THE BLOODY BUTCHER RITUAL CLUB

Written by

Alex Río Cortés

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Telegram +52 221 423 4166
alex.rio.cortes@hotmail.com

FADE IN

EXT. DEEP FOREST - NIGHT

The hoot of an owl blends with|the faint sound of a drum playing in the distance.

INT. MASTER'S CABIN - NIGHT

The dim light of an oil lamp casts dancing shadows on the wooden walls.

The cabin smells of ancient incense and damp earth.

THE HERMIT (50s) scruffy and serene. He wears loose, layered clothes in faded tones. He resembles the old man from the Marseille tarot card "L'Hermite." guides his APPRENTICE (20), thin, with a faint scar on his cheek, with slow gestures.

The APPRENTICE pounds a snare drum with closed eyes, furrowed brow, and tongue slightly out, as if conjuring something.

THE HERMIT
(whispering)
Don't strike. Flow. Let the soul come through.

The APPRENTICE nods, focused. His rhythm grows more fluid, more organic.

THE HERMIT watches him a moment longer... with a faint smile. He takes a small smooth stone from his pocket and places it on the edge of|the snare. Then, he silently walks into another room.

The APPRENTICE keeps playing, absorbed. The lamp crackles.

The snare echoes among creaking wood and the distant chirp of a cricket.

SOME TIME LATER

First light creeps through the window.

The APPRENTICE is still there, exhausted but steady, arms trembling.

CUT TO:

INT. WOODEN OUTHOUSE - DAY

THE HERMIT, sweaty, is trapped inside a rickety outhouse. He groans.

THE HERMIT (O.S.)
Damn dried plum!

INT. MASTER'S CABIN - CONTINUOUS

The APPRENTICE, uneasy, walks through the cabin.

He opens drawers, smells burnt incense, blows away ashes.

He finds a thick BOOK full of cryptic symbols.

He flips through it.

His eyes widen.

He decides.

EXT. DEEP FOREST - DAY

The APPRENTICE runs, the book under his arm.

He doesn't look back.

EXT. APPRENTICE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A modest house in a suburban neighborhood.

The full moon hangs still.

All is silent.

INT. APPRENTICE'S ROOM - NIGHT

The APPRENTICE rushes in, still holding the stolen BOOK.

He frantically closes doors and windows.

He places the book on a STAND. Opens it.

The pages crackle as if breathing.

Eyes wide. He begins to read.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - CONTINUOUS

A passerby walks by. Stops.

A strange rhythm is heard from inside the house. A distant drum roll.

Then something more complex... faster.

INT. APPRENTICE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The apprentice plays his snare drum. Each beat aligns with symbols that seem to shimmer subtly in the book.

Sweat.

Ecstasy.

Frenzy.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - CONTINUOUS

More people stop.

The rhythms grow dizzying, almost inhuman.

Some watch in awe.

Others in fear.

Streetlights flicker.

A car alarm wails, out of tune.

INT. APPRENTICE'S ROOM - NIGHT

A gust of wind blows out the lamp. Only the glow of the book remains.

The apprentice's eyes burn with emotion.

FADE OUT

EXT. APPRENTICE'S HOUSE - DAY - 10 YEARS LATER

The same house, now graffitied, wrecked, with boarded-up windows and trash at the entrance.

Spray-painted in pink and black on the facade:"Music is control too. Break the system!"

Below, red handprints like in a street exorcism.

SUSANA (24), guitar slung over her shoulder and carrying a backpack, walks by.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING WHERE SUSANA LIVES - DAY

A modest building, with a shared pedestrian entrance and a separate parking area.

Plants at the entrance in improvised pots.

INT. SUSANA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - OUTSIDE APARTMENT 201 - CONTINUOUS

SUSANA (guitar and backpack) opens the door as the sound of a blender and a newscast comes from inside.

INT. SUSANA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

SUSANA enters and closes the door.

The interior is cozy, full of plants, knitted cushions, and family photos.

At the dining table is her FATHER (50s), work shirt unbuttoned, flipping through the newspaper.

Her MOTHER (50s) is finishing pouring juice into a glass.

FATHER
(smiling without looking up)
How's the big hit coming?

SUSANA
(without breaking stride)
Still not viral, but I'm going full speed.

MOTHER
(loving sarcasm)
How about you go full speed on making your bed?

SUSANA greets them with a kiss and smiles as she walks to her room.

INT. SUSANA'S ROOM - DAY

SUSANA's room is a sonic sanctuary. Hanging plants, posters of PJ Harvey, Fazerdaze, a black-and-white photo with her former band.

A vintage keyboard next to a laptop with Garage band open.

SUSANA drops her backpack, unpacks her guitar, kicks off her sneakers without using her hands, picks up the guitar, plugs it into the amp, and puts it on.

She strums a few chords.

Something's off. She stops.

Starts tuning by ear.

She grabs a glass of water.

Looks at a framed photo on the wall: Her younger self(14), smiling, hugged by a guy with slicked-back hair GILBERTO(15).

SUSANA
(whispering)
Gilberto... where are you?

A pause.

In the distance, a blast: blast beats, double kick pedal, distorted growls.

The racket echoes through the hallways, coming from an apartment near SUSANA's. The neighbors, again.

SUSANA sighs. Pulls out big headphones. Puts them on. Closes her eyes.

Plays again. This time, a gentle chord progression. A brutal contrast to what's coming from outside.

SUSANA plays, focused. Her eyes open for a moment. Her gaze unconsciously returns to the photo with Gilberto.

One more chord. Her expression softens. A faint smile.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STREET MARKET / PEDESTRIAN WALKWAY - AFTERNOON

Food stalls, incense, second-hand clothes, esoteric goods. The atmosphere vibrates between the everyday and the strange.

GILBERTO (LONG-HAIRED), now 25, wears a faded King Crimson t-shirt and a jacket covered in patches. He walks among the stalls with a reusable market bag sticking out black candles and a jar filled with a thick reddish liquid.

He stops at an herb stall.

The VENDOR hands him a tube-shaped package wrapped in newspaper.

VENDOR
Here it is, güerito. Blend of rue, copal, and snake root. You said it was for opening portals, right?

GILBERTO nods, holding back a smile.

He pulls out the jar to stash the package.

Just then, SUSANA walks past the stalls.

She sees him from behind, recognizes him, freezes.

SUSANA
Gilberto?

He turns, surprised.

GILBERTO
Susana! No way

They laugh and hug awkwardly.

SUSANA
You look the same... just more scruffy.

GILBERTO
(joking)
Scruffy? Nah, it's glamour. Fame.

SUSANA
Calm down, Jimmy Hendrix. Is that... blood?
(pointing to the jar GILBERTO is holding)

GILBERTO
(quickly showing the jar)
This? Nah... beet juice. Detox stuff.

She smiles, slightly doubtful.

SUSANA
(noticing the bag he's holding)
And the black candles? Also part of your diet?

GILBERTO
(mischievously)
Yep. Light 'em up hungry... kills your appetite.

They both laugh. The tension breaks.

SUSANA
So... still playing?

GILBERTO
Every day. THE OLD MAN doesn't forgive. You? I saw your channel... you're killing it.

SUSANA
Hey, what if we jam sometime?

GILBERTO
Got a phone?

She recites her number as he types it into a battered phone.

SUSANA
Call me when you're done with beet.

GILBERTO
THE OLD MAN?

SUSANA
No! Silly! The beet juice.

GILBERTO nods, tucking the jar away.

GILBERTO
Promise.

She walks off into the crowd.

GILBERTO watches her go from a corner.

Takes out the jar, shakes it the "blood" moves thickly.

Pulls out a folded paper: a hand-drawn cryptic symbol.

He stares at it, serious. Puts it away.

Disappears into the market.

FADE TO:

EXT. OLD BUILDING - NIGHT

A building ravaged by time stands in a forgotten neighborhood of the city.

Its walls are covered in political graffiti and underground band stickers.

A wrought iron gate rattles as a motorcycle passes in the distance.

GILBERTO, now known as GREÑAS (25), climbs the stairs carrying a reusable market bag with black candles sticking out.

He reaches a door on the third floor.

A blue sign with white letters, styled like a license plate, hangs crooked from a single screw and a badly placed nail. The letters read:

BAROQUE STUDIO

GREÑAS pushes the door open. Enters.

INT. BAROQUE STUDIO - NIGHT

A rehearsal room, dark, wide, almost gloomy.

Walls covered in photocopies of classical paintings framed in wood, exposed wiring, peeling white paint, red curtains, metal and moisture.

LOLA (26) tunes her bass meticulously, expressionless.

PEPE (28) bounces, punches the air, stretches his neck and wrists as if stepping into a ring.

the APPRENTICE now known as THE OLD MAN (30) wears thick glasses as he flips through a book filled with strange symbols.

They all turn as GREÑAS enters, bag in hand.

THE OLD MAN
(dry, annoyed)
No way, man! You took forever.
(pause, sighs)
Why did it take you so long...?

GREÑAS
I was already on my way but...

THE OLD MAN
(clicks his tongue)
Whatever. Doesn't matter. Did you get everything?

GREÑAS nods. He barely sets the bag on a battered table when

THE OLD GUY snatches it from him.

He opens the bag, pulls out black candles, a jar of thick blood, and a newspaper-wrapped tube-shaped package.

THE OLD MAN
(while checking)
PeEerfect!

He opens the package: dried rue, copal, snake root.

With practiced hands, he crushes everything on the unrolled newspaper, mixes it, and fills a corn husk with a hefty amount.

Rolls it. He rolls a thick, crooked joint and places it in his mouth.

He grabs the jar with chicken blood.

Goes to the kitchen, pulls out two squeeze bottles. Fills both with blood. Grabs one. Returns to the room, kneels and traces a thick-lined pentagram on the floor.

He places the candles at each point and lights them one by one.

LOLA
(not looking up)
Ready to lose your soul again?

PEPE
(laughing, warming up his throat)
Again, Lola? I sold mine after the first demo.

GREÑAS opens the fridge, grabs a 40 oz beer, pops it open with a lighter and watches the ritual in silence.

THE OLD MAN, joint between his lips.

THE OLD MAN
(to Greñas)
Tune that thing, Greñas. We're about to start.

He walks to the switch and turns off the light.

Total darkness. Only the candles remain lit.

A flick: the flame of a lighter ignites the joint.

The mixture burns thick.

Faces glow intermittently from the embers.

THE OLD MAN exhales dense smoke.

His eyes reflect the glow.

Dark. Only the flickering glow of black candles lights the space.

A bloody pentagram stains the floor.

Shadows dance on the walls.

THE OLD MAN takes one last drag from his crooked joint made with rue, copal and snake root.

Exhales thick smoke.

He places it in a rusted ashtray near the drum set, still lit.

THE OLD MAN
(grave, almost solemn, holding the smoke)
Ready... you know the drill.From the top.
(releases smoke)
Obsession.

He sits behind the drums.

GREÑAS fine-tunes the last pegs of his guitar, already in position.

LOLA adjusts her bass tone with surgical precision.

PEPE clears his throat, breathing deep, as if preparing to scream from the depths of hell.

THE OLD MAN raises his drumsticks.

CLACK -- CLACK -- CLACK.

Three dry hits shatter the silence.

THE MUSIC BEGINS.

A childish, repetitive riff, almost dumb... yet unsettling.

The musicians' shadows dance in the candlelight.

The lyrics: babbling in a reversed language, a mix of whispers and growls.

The rhythm: hypnotic, fast, each section more complex than the last.

The candles flicker violently.

The pentagram glows faintly.

The book --open on an improvised stand-- radiates a red light that intensifies with every beat.

END OF THE PIECE

THE OLD MAN finishes with two final strikes.

Total silence.

One last muted hit.

All the candles extinguish at once.

Darkness.

Suddenly, red lights like liquid smoke rise from the book and swirl through the air, merging with the musicians' souls.

Their bodies shudder for a second.

Silence.

When the room lights come back on, their eyes burn like glowing embers.

They look at each other.

The fire fades.

PEPE
(hoarse voice)
Did it work?

LOLA
Yeah. Obviously. Like always.

THE OLD GUY takes a last drag from his joint, tosses it to the ground and snuffs it out with his foot.

THE OLD MAN
Pack it up. Let's go play.

One by one they start packing: pedals, cables, drumsticks...

The room loses its ritual form. It all looks like just another band rehearsal.

No one notices that in one corner of the pentagram, one of the black candles lies fallen, extinguished. In its place, a sweating 40 oz beer still stands in the center of the pentagram.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GREEN SPIRIT CAR (1992) - NIGHT

The interior vibrates with the purring engine.

Cables, pedals, and cases are piled in the trunk.

A dense, slow metal song plays from the speakers.

PEPE rides in the passenger seat, smoking.

LOLA and GREÑAS are in the back.

THE OLD MAN drives, serious, one hand on the wheel and the other on the gearshift.

PEPE
(looking out the window)
Remember when we were invited to play at that grimy high school? And the lights kept turning on and off by themselves.

GREÑAS
(laughs)
Dude... that principal pissed himself when you sang in Latin. I thought he was having a heart attack.

PEPE
(playing it cool)
It was ancient Aramaic, dude. I don't just sing for fun.

They all laugh. Except LOLA, who watches the passing streetlights silently through the window.

THE OLD MAN
It was intense. But nothing like the first ritual...
(silence, more serious)

The others look at him.

THE OLD MAN (CONT'D)
Ten years ago. I lived in Iztacalco. Alone. I spent hours with the book. One night I played something... different. Like it wasn't me playing.

GREÑAS
And what happened?

THE OLD MAN
At first I thought I was going crazy. But then the people... My neighbors brought me food without me asking. A lady who sold quesadillas gave me free dinners. Dogs wouldn't bark at me. They followed me.

PEPE
(half-surprised)
For real?

THE OLD MAN
That's right, man. They started doing everything I told them. No questions asked.

Silence. Only the music in the background.

THE OLD MAN (CONT'D)
Until one day, they came. A group of hooded, painted women, screaming. "Misogynist sorcerer," they shouted. They smashed my instruments, burned the mattresses. I had to escape through the rooftop.

GREÑAS
(surprised, but amused)
No way. And why didn't you use the book to make them disappear or something?

THE OLD MAN
(serious, without looking at him)
Because that's not what it's for. It's not meant to manipulate reality like some damn video game. Aren't you listening to what I'm telling you?

PEPE
(raises his hands, conciliatory)
Chill, bro... He´s just saying.

LOLA chimes in, calm, like a rational ally.

LOLA
THE OLD MAN is right. This isn't a game. It's power. And power always comes at a cost.

GREÑAS nods, uneasy.

A silence settles.

The city lights multiply on the windshield.

PEPE
Still... a little discount at 7-Eleven would be nice.

THE OLD MAN barely smiles.

GREÑAS lets out a dry chuckle.

LOLA watches him in the rearview mirror, expressionless.

CUT TO:

INT. STAGE - IMPROVISED CONCERT - NIGHT

COLD LIGHT, lifeless atmosphere. A young band -- four GUYS NO OLDER THAN 20 -- occupy the stage. The LEAD SINGER (18), skinny, with smudged eyeliner, sings with no energy.

The GUITARIST, nervous, is out of tune on every chord.

The BASSIST barely nods.

The DRUMMER looks like he's praying for it to end.

The AUDIENCE, scattered among beers and cellphones, watches with disinterest.

Some yawn, others just stare blankly.

The band's sound is harsh, offbeat, but sincere. They're in the middle of their final song.

EXT. SIDE STREET - BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

A green '92 Spirit pulls up to the rear entrance.

THE OLD MAN gets out first. Then GREÑAS, LOLA, and PEPE. They open the trunk and start unloading instruments:

- A heavy cymbal case,- a case with the bass,- the guitar covered in satanic stickers,- a torn backpack full of tangled cables.

LOCAL STAFF nod at them. No words exchanged. They're led through dark hallways, graffiti, and staircases.

They reach the side backstage area, dimly lit with red light.

On stage, the young band wraps up.

No applause. Just murmurs and awkward silence.

The LEAD SINGER steps up to the mic, trembling a little.

LEAD SINGER
Speaking hesitantly
Thanks... for coming. Punk... is... still resistance. Even... if it doesn't... sound good. We were The Castaways... of... Rage. Now, up next... a seriously badass band. Here they are... THE BLACK TAROT.

The AUDIENCE murmurs. Some lift their heads with interest.

Meanwhile: The OLD MAN sets up his cymbals with near-surgical precision.

GREÑAS tunes quickly, with a crooked grin.

LOLA plugs in without looking at anyone.

PEPE stretches his arms like he's about to step into a ring.

Without waiting, PEPE steps to the mic.

PEPE
(bluntly)
Good evening everybody. We are... THE BLACK TAROT!. This is to blow your minds... Literally.

The OLD MAN counts in with three dry stick hits.||1-2-3.||||BAM!||||Sound explosion. A powerful, addictive riff from GREÑAS. LOLA drops a deep line that shakes the ground. The OLD MAN hits the drums with precision. PEPE spits fast lyrics like an assault rifle. The music is catchy and deadly, almost infectious.

The AUDIENCE is hypnotized within seconds. Headbanging.

Some start smiling without knowing why.

The song is a whirlwind: sharp riffs, roaring bass, relentless drums.

PEPE spits lyrics fast, barely breathing.

People are shaking.

Some start jumping uncontrollably.

A sudden silence tricks the crowd.

CROWD
UHHHHHHH!

But the song picks up again. More violent. Faster.

The AUDIENCE's eyes go wide.

SECURITY GUARDS rip off their vests and dive into the crowd.

The AUDIENCE starts pushing toward the front.

LOLA
(stopping the bass)
This isn't right...

LOLA drops the bass on the floor, runs to THE OLD MAN.

LOLA
Something went wrong!

Some in the AUDIENCE try to climb on stage.

GREÑAS unplugs his guitar.

A dry hum rumbles.

He barely takes a step when a STAFF MEMBER appears out of nowhere, eyes rolled back, heading toward him.

||||CRACK!||GREÑAS smacks him in the face with the headstock.

The guy drops, unconscious.

THE OLD MAN stops playing, stands, and walks offstage.

PEPE keeps rapping, alone, no music, surrounded by a crowd now swarming the stage. He thinks it's a break.

PEPE
Go wild, dogs!

LOLA runs to PEPE.

LOLA
Pepe! PEPE! PEPE!

The CROWD is swallowing him.

She grabs his arm and pulls.

||||CRACK!||Only the arm comes free.

LOLA
(desperate)
NO!

HALLWAY - GREÑAS and THE OLD MAN run toward the back exit, breathing hard.

They stop once outside.

THE OLD MAN pulls at his hair. GREÑAS clutches his head.

GREÑAS
No fucking way! What about Lola?
And Pepe?

THE OLD MAN
Goddammit!

Some POSSESSED TECHS approach.

THE OLD MAN and GREÑAS run to the green '92 Spirit.

EXT. PARKING LOT

The car won't start.

Banging on the window.

Finally: THE ENGINE ROARS!

The car speeds off, runs over two STAFFERS.

One lands on the hood and rolls off.

INT. MOVING CAR

THE OLD MAN drives.

GREÑAS is trembling, bleeding from his arm.

GREÑAS´S cellphone rings.

GREÑAS answers.

GREÑAS
Hello? Lola? Is that you? What happened? Where are you?

LOLA
(over phone)
In the dressing room, dude.

GREÑAS
Is Pepe with you?

LOLA
He is, well not... he is, but it's just his arm.

GREÑAS
WHAT, WHAT...WHAT DO YOU MEAN JUST HIS ARM!?

THE OLD MAN
What about the rest?

LOLA
We can't call the cops. They'll think we drugged everyone. There's food here, and a bathroom. Let me know when it dies down.

GREÑAS
Alright... we'll keep watch. We'll call you when things calm down.

They hang up.

Silence again.

The Spirit disappears down an empty street.

DISSOLVE TO:

FLASHBACK (SUSANA'S DREAM) - HIGH SCHOOL COURTYARD - AFTERNOON

Clean uniforms, the golden afternoon sun.

A YOUNG GILBERTO (15), hair slicked back with gel, shirt neatly tucked in, falls to the ground after being shoved by TWO BULLIES.

YOUNG SUSANA (14), impeccable, bowl cut and headband, steps forward.

YOUNG SUSANA
Leave him alone! What's wrong with you?

THE BULLIES look at each other, laugh, and walk away.

YOUNG GILBERTO watches her, surprised.

He smiles shyly.

YOUNG GILBERTO
Thanks... do you know any songs?

YOUNG SUSANA
I have a guitar. But no idea how to use it.

YOUNG GILBERTO
I'll teach you. Just don't let anyone know I'm a romantic.

YOUNG SUSANA
(soft voice)
Thanks.

They both laugh.

They sit under a tree.

YOUNG GILBERTO positions the guitar on his lap.

He's about to play.

YOUNG GILBERTO
(guttural voice,
distorted guitar)
HOY BRU-JE-RIZ-MO PA TÍ
SA-TA-NIS-MÓ!

(First line of *Brujerizmo* by Brujería a Mexican-American extreme metal band ,after the cumbia intro)

INT. SUSANA'S BEDROOM - DAWN

SOUND: "Brujerizmo" by Brujería plays loudly -played live, coming from a nearby apartment.

SUSANA jolts upright, breathing hard.

The room is bright and tidy.

She puts a hand to her chest.

Sighs.

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - MINUTES LATER

SUSANA, still in pajamas, brushes her teeth in front of the mirror with a blank expression.

Her brushing is vigorous but resigned, matching the song's rhythm.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

SUSANA sits having breakfast with her family.

Her mother pours juice.

Her father reads the newspaper.

Everything seems normal, almost mechanical.

The music continues to seep in from afar, distorted but present.

SUSANA (V.O. or silently watching)

(No dialogue, just a restrained expression.

Drinks without enthusiasm.

She lifts the glass of juice.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT TWO FLOORS UP - AFTERNOON

A messy living room in an apartment two floors above the same building where SUSANA lives. Cheap instruments, tangled

cables, empty beer cans.

On the walls, tattered posters of metal and punk bands. The sound is chaos: offbeat drums, lost bass, dirty guitar. THE BLOODY BUTCHER play "Brujerizmo" by Brujería for the umpteenth time, without any enthusiasm.

FEDERICO (22) pounds the drums with fury and speed, but no groove.

ARISTÓTELES (21) plays loud power chords, nothing more.

GUSTAVO (24) plays an out-of-tune, unsynchronized bass--barely audible.

MANUEL (23), vocalist, screams gutturally.

(Distorted final riff. Poorly hit cymbal.)

MANUEL
(screaming into the mic)
BRUJERIZMO!

NEIGHBORS (OFF)
(shouting from other apartments)
You already played that one! -
Don't you know any other songs? -
You suck!

MANUEL
(smiling, as if they were compliments)
Thank you!

Tense silence.

Everyone's frustrated.

GUSTAVO drops his bass forcefully.

GUSTAVO
(almost shouting)
Turn down your fucking guitar, ARISTÓTELES! No one can hear the bass!

FEDERICO
(not turning his head)
No one cares about bass anyway. But you gotta have one... like in Metallica.

ARISTÓTELES
(laughing hard)
Yeah, right. When have you ever remembered a song for the bass?

MANUEL
(into the mic, guttural)
Shut up and stop arguing, assholes!
(puts the mic down, back to normal tone)
What if we watch videos of other bands? Maybe we'll find something cool.

SMASH CUT TO

Everyone sitting on a couch around an old laptop covered in stickers from extinct bands.

They pass around a bottle of Tonayán (cheap Mexican cane liquor) and eat stale chips.

The laptop plays a video of a band kind of like Dream Theater, performing a long, sugary solo.

ARISTÓTELES
(being a jerk)
That guitar player sounds tooootally gay.

Now the laptop shows a metal band wearing masks, Slipknot-style, pounding on drums furiously.

GUSTAVO
(dumb as hell)
No shit, those dudes wear masks so their moms won't yell at them at home.

The laptop shows a virtuoso guitarist with a double-neck guitar.

FEDERICO
(very douchey)

Ha! Look at that idiot... with the double-neck guitar. Looks like some pervert whit a pageboy haircut jerking off two chicks at the same time.

General stupid laughter.

Until...||||SILENCE.||||

On screen appears a video of THE OLD MAN. Alone, on an old wooden platform. A rusty drum kit. Dim lights. A broken cymbal. And yet what he does seems impossible. Every hit has surgical intent. Every silence breathes power.

||||SOUND: The dry thud of the kick drum. Precise. Organic. Ancient.||||

Everyone stops chewing.

The bottle stops moving.

No one dares to speak for almost a minute.

MANUEL
(whispering, like in a trance)
Hey... I know that guy. They call him THE OlD MAN. Everyone who's ever played in this city knows him. He's been around forever even before the internet existed.

ARISTÓTELES
(skeptical)
For real, MANUEL? He doesn't look that old.

FEDERICO
(serious, like it's true)
For sure he eats corn flakes with baby blood for breakfast.

Big laugh.

The spell breaks--but not completely.

MANUEL
(thoughtful, still half-entranced)
What if we go to his place? Maybe he can help us sound badass

They keep watching the video closely.

GUSTAVO
(still watching the video, nodding)
Yeah no harm in checking it out

GUSTAVO eats a chip and takes a swig of Tonayán.

GUSTAVO chews half-heartedly.

THE OLD MAN's drums rumble again.

MONTAGE - "BARBIE GIRL" BY AQUA - AFTERNOON

The song "Barbie Girl" (Aqua) starts playing.(Comedic montage. Fast-paced editing. Complete contrast with the band's tone.)

INT. REHEARSAL APARTMENT

THE BLOODY BUTCHER guys are sprawled on a couch. An open laptop.

One of them types: "the drummer the old local underground legend"

CUT TO:

LAPTOP SCREEN||Among the search results appears:||"Music lessons with THE OLD MAN"||Full address.

A finger points excitedly.||||ARISTÓTELES||Yes, yes, yes! This has to be him!||||

INT. APARTMENT - BATHROOM

FEDERICO showers while moving rhythmically.||Blue shower cap. Long brush as a microphone. Steam.

EXT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

ARISTÓTELES knocks on the door.

ARISTÓTELES
Hurry the hell up, dude!

FEDERICO comes out wearing only a towel. Wet hair. A foul-smelling steam cloud follows him.

ARISTÓTELES enters...immediately comes back out, disgusted, waving his hand.

He grabs an air freshener and sprays mercilessly before going back in.

INT. BEDROOM - MIRROR

MANUEL tries on various outfits: star-shaped sunglasses, vinyl pants, cowboy hat, studded cape, overalls with no shirt.

In the end, he shrugs.

Leaves just as he was: torn sweatpants.

INT. LIVING ROOM - COUCH

GUSTAVO is asleep with an ALARMA magazine (a real Mexican crime tabloid infamous for graphic, uncensored photos of violence, accidents and corpses) on his face. Snores.

ARISTÓTELES throws a plastic plate with chips at him.

Chips fly.

ARISTÓTELES
Wake up, man! We're leaving!

GUSTAVO gets up, brushing off the remains like it's nothing.

EXT. STREET - APARTMENT PARKING LOT - AFTERNOON

They get into their rusty VAN, no back windows, plastic bags as windows. The muffler backfires. Graffiti on the body: "Pantera Rules", "Cannibal Corpse 666", "Free el Javi"

They drive off. The engine sounds like a dying cough.

INT. VAN - MOVING - SUNSET

The city scrolls past the windows: street vendors, tall buildings, stray dogs.

ARISTÓTELES drives, serious.

MANUEL rides shotgun, navigating with his phone.

FEDERICO gazes dreamily out the window.

GUSTAVO sticks half his body out.

He smiles at a MAN selling roses then, still smiling, flips him off.

The MAN flips him off right back.

GUSTAVO chuckles softly, unfazed.

FEDERICO sways his head gently, eyes closed.

He's really feeling the song.

MANUEL gestures to turn.

MANUEL
(pointing at a building)
This is it. Stop here.

ARISTÓTELES brakes in front of an old building.

MANUEL
(to the guys in the back)
We're here. Supposedly... this is it. Get out, bastards.

They get out one by one. The van door creaks like a coffin.

FEDERICO is last, lagging behind.

Cheerfully hums as he walks:

FEDERICO
(singing)
I'm a Barbie girl, in a Barbie world...

He walks rhythmically as he enters.

CUT TO:

INT. STAIRS - OLD BUILDING - AFTERNOON

They go up the stairs.

They catch a sour smell, like a wet cat.

INT. HALLWAY - OUTSIDE APARTMENT DOOR - AFTERNOON

They reach the third floor. Hanging on a battered door is a blue metal sign in the style of a license plate. White letters:||||BAROQUE STUDIO||||

ARISTÓTELES
(quietly reading)
"Baroque Studio" DON´T BE SUCH A PRETENTIOUS ASS!

MANUEL
This must be it. Let's go.

FEDERICO knocks twice.||||KNOCK KNOCK.||||

Nothing.

He pushes the door with his shoulder.||||CREAK. The door gives in.||||

INT. BAROQUE STUDIO - AFTERNOON

Darkness. Candle smoke.

A pentagram drawn in chicken blood, a 40 oz beer in the center.

An open book on a stand.

Cats everywhere.

Meows and glowing eyes.

FEDERICO
(shouting)
OLD MAN!?

GUSTAVO
(looking at the floor)
Holy shit... a fucking pentagram.

MANUEL
(surprised, touching the blood)
What the hell is this? Cat blood or what?

FEDERICO
(shouting, then softer and drawn-out)
OLD MAN? old maa aaaan...!?

ARISTÓTELES
What if all this shit is to summon him?

They all look at each other.

ARISTÓTELES
(serious)
This shit's weird... but now that we're here, let's explore.

They split up.

EXPLORATION SEQUENCE - OMINOUS MUSIC PLAYS

INT. LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

MANUEL opens drawers, pulls out old clothes, throws everything on the floor.

Finds a table lamp. Unplugs it and keeps it.

INT. KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

GUSTAVO rummages through rusty dishes.

Puts an old cookware set into a reusable market bag.

Finds a squeeze bottle with red liquid.

GUSTAVO
(sniffing it)
Cat blood?

INT. BATHROOM - AFTERNOON

FEDERICO looks at the filthy bathroom.

Grabs an old plunger like a trophy.

INT. LIVING ROOM - BOOK STAND - AFTERNOON

ARISTÓTELES looks at the open book.

Flips through it slowly.

Goes still, hypnotized.

SOUND IN THE DISTANCE: POLICE SIREN.||||

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

MANUEL returns with the lamp and a cat under his arm.

MANUEL
The cops! Let's go, you assholes!

They all hurry.

ARISTÓTELES grabs the book without thinking.

They run out the door.

EXT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

FEDERICO is the last one out.

He stops, looks at the sign: BAROQUE STUDIO.

Digs in his pants pocket, pulls out a multitool keychain, uses it as a screwdriver.

GUSTAVO comes back for him.

GUSTAVO
FEDERICO! What the hell are you doing, idiot? Let's go!

FEDERICO
Wait! This sign... it has to be mine.

GUSTAVO
Are you kidding me? Drop that crap!

FEDERICO
Almost there...

GUSTAVO
Dude, come on!

FEDERICO
Done! Let's roll!

They both run down the stairs with their loot.

CUT TO:

STAIRS - SECONDS LATER

A silhouette climbs from the ground floor.

It's LOLA. Dirty, serious, on guard. Still dressed like when she left the gig.

She climbs carefully.

FEDERICO and GUSTAVO rush past her. They don't notice.

She watches them as she continues.

INT. HALLWAY - THIRD FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

She reaches the threshold of Baroque Studio.

The door is still open.

Cats wander inside. On the floor: melted candles, the pentagram, the stand empty.

LOLA looks out the window toward the street.

LOLA'S POV:||||THE BLOODY BUTCHER rush out of the building. Carrying "loot."||||

ARISTÓTELES holds the book.

LOLA
(whispering)
It can't be...

CUT TO:

STAIRS - INTERIOR

LOLA now runs downstairs. Determined.

EXT. STREET - IN FRONT OF THE BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

LOLA steps out just in time to see the back of the VAN disappearing around the corner.

She stops. Takes a deep breath.

LOLA
(whispering, firm)
THE BLOODY BUTCHER...

CUT TO BLACK

FADE IN:

EXT. DESERTED STREET NEAR THE IMPROVISED CONCERT - NIGHT

Silence reigns.

A few erratic FIGURES wander like drunks but something's off.

Glassy eyes, clumsy movements.

A beat-up but still running 1992 GREEN SPIRIT is parked.

Inside, GREÑAS and THE OLD MAN.

INT. GREEN SPIRIT - CONTINUOUS

THE OLD MAN looks out the window.

THE OLD MAN
What's up with Lola? She's not answering?

GREÑAS

looking at his phone.

Nothing, it's ringing but... no answer.

THE OLD MAN
(not looking at him)
Keep calling her.

GREÑAS dials again.

Ringing.

No answer.

He slumps in the seat, frustrated.

THE OLD MAN
We can't leave without her.
(a beat)
At least... let's wait until things calm down.

Silence between them.

A distant siren wails.

A zombified FIGURE staggers across the street.

Suddenly: GREÑAS' PHONE RINGS.

Screen: "SUS."

GREÑAS hesitates.

Sees the name.

The phone keeps ringing.

Finally, he picks up.

GREÑAS
(softly, defeated)
Hello... hello... heeello?

SUSANA (V.O.)
Gilberto! Can you hear me?

GREÑAS takes a deep breath.

He takes a moment before speaking.

GREÑAS
Listen, Susana I don't know how to say this. I've always had feelings for you... you know, ever since we met... from the very first moment...(pause)I'm in trouble.

SUSANA (V.O.)
Trouble? What kind of trouble?

GREÑAS
(sincere, nervous)
Do you remember the candles? And the beet juice

SUSANA (V.O.)
Uh-huh...

GREÑAS
It wasn't beet juice. It was blood. Chicken blood. (pause) For a ritual... mind control. It makes whoever listens want more, buy all the merch follow us on social media do whatever we say. But something went wrong. Now they're like zombies.

SUSANA (V.O.)
(distressed)
Gilberto! Stop it! What are you talking about? Are you high? Are you using drugs?

GREÑAS covers his eyes with one hand.

SUSANA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
If you're using something, I can help you. Let's go to rehab together, we can get through this. I swear.

GREÑAS
Susana! Listen to me! I'm telling you the truth!

SUSANA (V.O.)
(voice trembling)
Please... don't make this harder. I'm not angry. But I can't talk to you like this. Call me when you're sober or whatever it is you're on wears off.

GREÑAS looks out the window.

More zombified FIGURES stagger around.

Fear in his eyes.

GREÑAS
Alright... I know you don't believe me.

SUSANA (V.O.)
Hang in there. You're not alone. You can trust me.

GREÑAS
Talk soon.

SUSANA (V.O.)
Okay...

The call ends.

GREÑAS lowers the phone slowly.

THE OLD MAN watches him closely from the driver's seat.

THE OLD MAN
(serious, dry)
Wanna grab a beer?

GREÑAS shrugs. "What else can we do."

The '92 GREEN SPIRIT starts up.

It drives off slowly among FIGURES stumbling like drunks under the streetlights.

SMASH TO CUT:

INT. BLOODY BUTCHER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

THE BLOODY BUTCHER crew bursts in like a whirlwind, carrying their treasures.

MANUEL walks into the bedroom, sets the cat down on the floor, and installs the table lamp.

He puts his hands on his hips and admires it proudly.

FEDERICO drops the plunger at the entrance and wastes no time looking for a hammer.

Determined, he nails his new sign--"BAROQUE STUDIO"--on a wall, doing his best to make it perfect.

GUSTAVO opens the reusable market bag and arranges his loot like it's a museum of the absurd: a rusted cookware set, a squeeze bottle possibly filled with cat blood.

ARISTÓTELES
(showing the plunger)
Look, at least now we've got this for when Federico or that shithead Gustavo clogs the toilet.

GUSTAVO
Hey, don't say that to me, asshole, I've got dignity!
(while pulling out a strange half-smoked joint from the market bag and lighting it)

He curls up in a corner of the couch, smoking, watching the cat MANUEL pets absentmindedly.

GUSTAVO
And this cat? Are we keeping it as a pet or turning it into tacos?

MANUEL
I don't know, but let's not let it go. It's part of the crew now and it's got the right vibe.

ARISTÓTELES flips through the book, fascinated.

The pages crackle as if alive.

ARISTÓTELES
Check this out!
(shows a page)
A pentagram, chicken blood, black candles this sounds badass!

GUSTAVO
Who writes that kind of crap?

ARISTÓTELES
Look, we always pull stupid shit. And if we're gonna keep doing it, let's at least do it right.

No one answers.

ARISTÓTELES
We've got nothing to lose anymore!

FEDERICO freezes mid-swing and looks at the book.

MANUEL
All bark and no bite. Let's do it!

ARISTÓTELES
Okay, move those candles off that fucking dumbass altar you made for Blink-182 and set them up here.

FEDERICO complies, while ARISTÓTELES draws a pentagram on the floor using the "ketchup" GUSTAVO brought.

ARISTÓTELES
Fuck, no one knows how to read sheet music, here are the lyrics, but, what about the melody?

MANUEL
No worries, check this app out.

He scans the book with his phone.

The app returns the tabs.

MANUEL sends them to the group chat.

Each one reads them on their phone while a bottle of Tonayán (cheap sugarcane liquor) starts going around.

Some burp, others laugh.

And without meaning to, it's already midnight.

They turn off the lights.

Only the candles remain.

And they start to play.

A dissonant song, out of tune, something between off-key punk and a satanic chant badly translated by Google.

In the distance, apartment lights flick on.

NEIGHBORS (V.O.)
Not again!- This is unbearable!-
Check on grandma!- I work tomorrow,
dammit!

Children cry. A dog barks.

The song ends.

Silence.

FEDERICO places a hand on his chest.

FEDERICO
What the hell?

GUSTAVO
Why does everything sound so weird?

ARISTÓTELES
I feel a buzzing in my ears... like
someone whispering.

MANUEL
God... what's happening?

They start to look at each other.

One by one, they fade.

As if an invisible force flipped their switches.

They collapse--either asleep or possessed.

The candles sputter before going out.

Darkness falls like a heavy curtain.

Absolute silence.

The cat watches them from atop an amp, its gaze almost human.

It blinks.

A page in the book turns on its own. No one sees.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. THE BLOODY BUTCHER'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Everything is silence and hangover. On the floor: empty Tonayán bottles, dried-up cigarette butts, leftover chips.

The band is sprawled out asleep:

GUSTAVO, face down on the bass.

MANUEL, head resting on the bass drum.

ARISTÓTELES, hugging the stolen cat.

FEDERICO, drooling on a bowl of milkless corn flakes.

The door opens softly.

LOLA sneaks in. She carries a backpack and wears dark sunglasses. She surveys the scene with a mix of pity and resignation.

She walks over to the book next to FEDERICO, who is sleeping with his head buried in the cereal bowl.

The book is open to a music sheet page, stained with cigarette ash.

LOLA carefully picks up the book and slips it into her backpack.

Before leaving, she looks around.

A pause.

She quietly closes the door.

INT. REHEARSAL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

ARISTÓTELES wakes up first. Rubs his face. Looks around.

ARISTÓTELES
We got robbed!

The others sit up, still half-drunk.

FEDERICO
(freaking out)
What?! No! Don't tell me they took my sign!

He runs to the back. The "BAROQUE STUDIO" sign is still nailed to the wall.

FEDERICO
(relieved)
Phew it's fine still here... HEY! Wanna grab some quesadillas?

ARISTÓTELES
No, idiot! They took the book!

FEDERICO turns pale.

They all look at each other. Gulp.

||||Silence.||||

EXT. STREET - CHASE - DAY

LOLA runs full speed down the sidewalk with her backpack.

The band follows, stumbling into each other like poorly trained drunkards.

LOLA glances back. She sees them getting closer.

She hops on a bus just before the doors close.

The band bangs on the windows, frustrated.

But at the next stop... The DRIVER chats with a lady selling tamales.

The band seizes the chance and hops on.

INT. BUS - SECONDS LATER

LOLA sees them coming.

She sighs.

Pulls the book from her backpack.

LOLA
Listen, idiots. You did the ritual wrong. Now, the book's true owner is coming for you. The book holds your souls. And if we don't fix it... it'll swallow you too.

ARISTÓTELES
The what?

LOLA
(serious)
The book holds the souls of everyone who used it wrong. Now you'll have to get yours back... by facing him.

LOLA points toward the bus door.

CUT TO:

THE HERMIT, dressed in white, has just stepped on silently.

His eyes are blank, his feet are caked with dirt, and he holds a rainstick in his hands.

GUSTAVO
(trembling)
No way...

MANUEL
Who the hell is that hippie!?

LOLA
(fast, low)
He's coming for you--let's get out of here!

FEDERICO
RUN!

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

The band and LOLA exit through the back door and run as best they can.

THE HERMIT steps off slowly behind them, like he's in no hurry.

From inside the bus:

DRIVER (O.S.)
Hey! You rats! No one paid the fare, you broke freeloaders!

CUT TO:

INT. BLOODY BUTCHER'S OLD VAN - DAY

ARISTÓTELES climbs into the driver's seat, inserts the keys and starts the engine.

He grabs the steering wheel with one hand and shifts gears with the other.

LOLA gets into the passenger seat with her backpack.

FEDERICO, GUSTAVO, and MANUEL settle in the back.

The van pulls away. Through the window, the rehearsal building -- where SUSANA also lives -- fades into the distance.

FEDERICO nervously taps his drumsticks on the backrest. GUSTAVO pets the possessed cat. MANUEL chews on a taco.

LOLA has the book open on her lap.

ARISTÓTELES
So now what? What's the plan?

LOLA
We're going to THE OlD MAN'S private rehearsal room. We used to record there. Nobody goes. And it's safe.

ARISTÓTELES
And then?

LOLA
We perform the ritual to reverse what you did... and then everyone goes home.

MANUEL
(to the cat)
Hey, do you think there's a ritual to get these idiots to stop talking?

LOLA flips through the book without looking at him.

FEDERICO
Lola, where did that satanic music encyclopedia come from? Did you steal it at some crazy old lady's garage sale?

Nothing.

LOLA pretends to be focused on a candle diagram.

GUSTAVO
Do those red markings really mean anything? They look like fractals. They taught us about fractals in high school, though I didn't quite get it they're like lines that create patterns, or something?

LOLA
(LOLA looks up, serious.)

Those fractals are energy portals. They open doors to other planes. Each one has a different use. This one, for example... can heal your physical wounds, whatever they may be.

FEDERICO blinks.

FEDERICO
Physical wounds? I hope it works on the calluses I get after playing for eight hours!

ARISTÓTELES laughs, shifts gears.

MANUEL
And that other one? The one that looks like a pentagram with feathers does it do anything?

LOLA
(sighs)
That's the Ritual of Space-Time Perception. You can play with superhuman speed and accuracy.

MANUEL
Perfect, now I can curse the crowd faster without getting tongue-tied.

FEDERICO
(serious)
Is there a ritual for Infinite Lighters?

LOLA gives him a slight smile, turns to look at him.

LOLA
No one needs a spell to light a fire.

GUSTAVO watches her with a hint of admiration.

GUSTAVO
Hey, but the one to attract fans that one must be pretty useful.

LOLA slams the book shut.

LOLA
That ritual is called OBSESSION. You've already tested it. And by the way you did it wrong.

Silence.

Only the van's engine and the cat's faint meow.

ARISTÓTELES
Thanks for not boring us to death and for explaining which parts of the book are useful and which aren't.

LOLA turns on the radio. A station plays weakly through the static.

She stares through the windshield, serious.

LOLA
(softly)
All right, next stop: the Old Man's lair.

The VAN drives down a dusty road.

Their chatter and laughter fade away.|||

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. OUTSIDE THE VENUE WHERE THE CONCERT TOOK PLACE - EVENING

A Spirit '92 crosses the street with solemn calm.

Behind the wheel, THE OLD MAN wears a serious expression, while GREÑAS, in the passenger seat, enjoys a liter of beer in a disposable cup.

THE OLD MAN
(pointing)
That one... is he awake or still possessed?

GREÑAS
(looking out the window)
Mmm... that one looks half-awake. He's not dragging his feet.

THE OLD MAN
(calmly)
Easy. They're coming out of the trance. The ritual caused a disruption... but we must be careful. There are still... active beings.

GREÑAS
(looking ahead, alarmed)
Dude, that guy's running at us!

GREÑAS
(suddenly, determined)
Alright, I'm getting out! If he comes at me, I'll hop back in, cool? But don't leave me, asshole.

Greñas jumps out of the car quickly, sips his beer, and stands firm in front of the approaching figure--arms outstretched, vacant eyes.

GREÑAS
(shouting)
Hey, man! You good?

The figure speeds up.

GREÑAS
(shouting louder)
AHHH, STILL A ZOMBIE!

Without thinking, GREÑAS throws the beer straight at the walker's face. The beer splashes like ceremonial lava, knocking the man to the ground.

The Spirit '92 pulls up and screeches to a halt.

THE OLD MAN jumps out and, upon seeing the fallen figure, yells.

THE OLD MAN
(yelling, desperate)
WAIT, HOLY SHIT! THAT'S MY MASTER!

THE OLD MAN kneels beside the drenched HERMIT, who coughs with mystical dignity.

THE OLD MAN
(voice breaking)
Master! Are you alright? This is GREÑAS... he can't tell the difference between a spiritual guide and a drunk hobo.

GREÑAS
(smiling, confused)
That hippie's your master? No way!
(extends hand, embarrassed)
Sorry, sir... I didn't know who you were. I'm Gilberto, Greñas to my friends. Nice to meet you.
(beat)
I'll catch you later, I'm going to find Lola.

GREÑAS walks away from the car.

THE OLD MAN opens the trunk, pulls out a backpack, and starts dressing the MASTER in a black T-shirt with a UFO print and dark rave sunglasses--making him look like an early 2000s raver.

INT. DRESSING ROOM / BACKSTAGE - EVENING

GREÑAS enters, alone. He looks around, searching.

Takes out his phone. Dials.

Rings.

Nothing.

Dials again.

INT. SMALL BAR - STAGE - SAME TIME

SUSANA stands in front of the microphone. Her phone vibrates silently, forgotten in her dressing room.

She takes a deep breath.

SUSANA
This song is very special to me. It's dedicated to those who have someone fighting against things that destroy them...This one's for you, Gilberto.

She starts playing the chords to Wish You Were Here.

Her voice soft and emotional.

INT. DRESSING ROOM / BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

GREÑAS hangs up. Leaves his phone on a table.

He sighs.

Sits down.

Holds his head in his hands.

Looks at the floor. A phone, lying there.

He picks it up. It's LOLA's phone.

Confused. He slips it into his pocket and leaves, forgetting his own phone.

EXT. STREET - SUNSET

GREÑAS exits the venue. He's met by a disconcerting sight:People waking from the trance, walking around disoriented.

Some hug each other.

Others just stare at the sky.

GREÑAS watches, stunned.

In the distance, parked by the curb: the Spirit '92. Leaning against the hood, THE HERMIT in his black UFO T-shirt and dark sunglasses. Beside him, THE OLD MAN speaks calmly.

The scene fills with contemplative silence as SUSANA's voice sings the chorus of Wish You Were Here.

GREÑAS looks at them.

Then at LOLA's phone in his hand.

The wind blows.

The song continues.

FADE TO BLACK.

CUT TO:

EXT. MCDONALD'S - DAY

A bustling MCDONALD'S. PEOPLE walk along the sidewalk, cars drive by. The city's hustle fills the air.

INT. MCDONALD'S - LATER

Everyone sits around a table. THE OLD MAN eats a McFlurry with devotion, as if it were a sacred elixir.

GREÑAS sips a giant Coca-Cola through a straw.

THE HERMIT is sitting, peaceful.

The atmosphere is odd.

Silence, until THE OLD MAN speaks, epic and absurdly reflective.

THE OLD MAN
I met him back in '92... I was touring with a jazz-tropical fusion band. We arrived in Tepoztlán. I joined a music retreat. A temazcal that smelled like damp earth and patchouli. He was there...The only one who could tune a jarana with his mind. He lived off Indian walnuts and sugar-free organic decaf coffee. He taught me to feel the vibrations of trees. To play with my chakras. Once he made me cry with a recycled-wood cello, played with a bow strung with xoloitzcuintle hair...Since then... I've followed him.

Pause.

Everyone looks at him. Awkward silence.

GREÑAS watches, unsure whether to mock or ask something.

DINER (O.S.)
(whispering from another table)
What the hell?

GREÑAS
(breaking the silence)
...Master, and why did he attack me?

THE HERMIT
It wasn't an attack. I approached to see if you still had your soul. The cold beer confirmed it. Thank you for that.
(Pause, He wipes himself with a napkin.)
I didn't want to recover the book. I let it go... because I knew something else was looking for it. An entity. An ancient being. A force that cannot return on its own.

THE OLD MAN
What does it need?

THE HERMIT
Bodies. Many bodies. But not just any. They must be empty... sparkless, directionless, substance-less...

GREÑAS
Like... a talentless band?

THE HERMIT
(nodding)
Minds that don't understand their place in the world. Beings without purpose. They're easily possessed. And through them... it can spread.

THE OLD MAN
Like a band that only plays covers, or something?

Sudden silence.

THE OLD MAN takes the last sip of his McFlurry.

THE HERMIT meditates, eyes half closed.

GREÑAS drinks from his giant Coke, still processing.

Suddenly, a ringtone breaks the atmosphere:

RINGTONE (V.O.)
SANTO CALLING BLUE DEMON. SANTO CALLING BLUE DEMON. BLUE, COME IN...

(We hear the voice of "El Santo" calling "Blue Demon" -- two legendary Mexican wrestlers who starred in Blue Demon vs. the Satanic Power (1973), where Santo communicates with Blue Demon through a smart watch.)

GREÑAS
(raising an eyebrow)
Is that... your intruder alarm?

THE OLD MAN
(grave)
The sanctuary has been defiled...

He pulls out his phone.

CELL PHONE - SCREEN (LIVE FEED):

Grainy image, night vision. An ABANDONED THEATER, dark, dusty, full of rusted structures. LOLA cuts a chain with giant bolt cutters and enters.

Behind her, four figures move cautiously and suspiciously.

GREÑAS
(leaning in, confused)
Is that Lola?

THE OLD MAN
(nodding, tense)
Yes... and she's not alone.

GREÑAS
Who are those...?

Both speak at the same time, eyes wide open.

BOTH
The Bloody Butcher!

Pause.

THE OLD MAN, still staring at his phone, squeezes his McFlurry cup.

He flattens it against the table with theatrical solemnity.

He stands up forcefully, pointing at the door like delivering a divine command.

THE OLD MAN
TO THE OLD MAN-MOBILE!

INTENSE RED SCREEN:

THE OLD MAN'S head spins violently in strange loops, zooming in and out as if being pulled into the universe. In the background, a loud, heroic mix of jarana jarocha, pre-Hispanic flute, and tribal drums blasts through the speakers.

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED THEATER - STAGE - NIGHT

The shadows of the semi-abandoned theater tremble under a pair of bare spotlights.

Strange symbols are drawn on the stage floor. At the center, a carved lectern; to the sides, amplifiers, connected instruments, and microphones dangling from creaking cables.

LOLA walks in with firm steps.

Behind her, ARISTÓTELES (guitar), MANUEL (vocals), GUSTAVO (bass), and FEDERICO (drums) step onto the stage, with faces saying "where the hell did you bring us?"

LOLA
(placing the book on the lectern)
All right. Take your positions: Aristóteles on guitar, Manuel on the mic, Federico behind the drums Gustavo, next to the bass.

She hands out sheet music with absurd symbols.

MANUEL
Are the lyrics in Spanish?

LOLA
Ah, right! I forgot you don't read sheet music. Don't worry -- just follow my lead. Okay?

THE BLOODY BUTCHERS look at each other, incredulous -- even GUSTAVO raises an eyebrow.

LOLA
(tuning her ear, vocalizing an Arabic-style chant)
"aaaaaaa aaaaaa aaaaa aaaa aaa"

A soft, swirling cold wind invades the stage.

Everyone looks around, confused.

LOLA
FEDERICO, you start. Funk rhythm, no cymbals. TU TUM, PA TU TU TUM PA, TU TUM PA TU, PA TUM! Next round, MANUEL, you come in.
(Arabic-style chant)
"aaaaaaa aaaaaaa aaaaa aaaa aaaa"

A swirling cold wind returns, stronger this time, snatching the sheet music from FEDERICO, ARISTÓTELES, and GUSTAVO.

The wind doesn't affect MANUEL, who still holds the lyric sheet.

LOLA
GUSTAVO, tonic in A minor, you enter with FEDERICO. ARISTÓTELES, rhythm guitar, you come in after MANUEL.

ARISTÓTELES nods.

LOLA
(to everyone)
Drum fill and we come in -- drums with cymbals, bass using support notes, guitar with scale flourishes. Ready?

FEDERICO adjusts the drum kit to his liking, sits down, and gets his sticks ready.

FEDERICO
Ready!

(The band starts rehearsing "Hechicera" by Maná)

The song begins well, but when FEDERICO does the fill to finish the intro and move into the song, he overdoes it.

A swarm of flies bursts onto the stage.

FEDERICO
(horrified, swatting at flies)
Ah, shit!

LOLA
(screaming)
WHAT THE FUCK DID YOU DO?!

ARISTÓTELES
(swatting at flies)
You summoned Beelzebub, man!

FEDERICO
(swatting at the last flies as they start to disperse)
Sorry, I got carried away!

They try again.

They make it past the intro fill and into the song.

GUSTAVO starts playing with his eyes closed, slapping the bass dramatically.

He begins to float.

LOLA
Get down, you idiot! This isn't a David Copperfield show!

GUSTAVO opens his eyes, realizes he's floating -- keeps playing the same.

ARISTÓTELES and FEDERICO notice and stop playing.

GUSTAVO crashes to the ground.

Keeps playing.

LOLA
Could you idiots stop it for once in your lives?... this is really important.

LOLA's eyes glint with a kind of dark delight.

They appear docile, in a way -- something about how LOLA leads and handles them seems to appeal to them.

LOLA
Again! From the top!
(slowly, sweet voice)
...three, four.

They start again.

They play the intro.

LOLA moves rhythmically.

They enter the song properly.

The lyrics begin and MANUEL sings, LOLA lip syncs as she sways to the rhythm.

(The final drum fill blends into the roar of a SPIRIT 92 engine)

A. INT. SPIRIT 92 - HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Close-up of THE OLD MAN: furrowed brows, eyes ablaze.

Serious, focused, hands on the wheel.

The engine roars again, syncing with the fill to lead into the second verse.

INT. ABANDONED THEATER - STAGE

MANUEL sings the verse.

LOLA dances slowly, gracefully, with delicacy while the band plays behind her.

A. INT. SPIRIT 92

Close-up of THE OLD MAN: deeper frown, fiercer eyes.

Teeth bared, seething, breathing in and out.

He shifts gears abruptly and accelerates.

The engine roars.

A. EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The SPIRIT 92 speeding down the highway.

A. INT. SPIRIT 92

GREÑAS stares blankly, eyes rolled back, drinking mate in the backseat.

THE HERMIT: UFO t-shirt, giant dark sunglasses, riding shotgun -- completely still, radiating unsettling calm.

THE OLD MAN drives desperately as the road races past the driver-side window.

A. EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The SPIRIT 92 speeding down the highway -- panoramic view.

INT. ABANDONED THEATER - STAGE

A powerful swirling wind fills the room and flashing strobe-like lights burst like lightning.

LOLA lip syncs during the chorus while conducting the band with her hands like an orchestra conductor, moving rhythmically without looking at them. Her hair blows in the wind sweeping through the room.

The band plays and performs like pros, each in their own style.

A. EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The music cuts off -- timed with the SPIRIT 92 speeding past and vanishing down the road.

INT. ABANDONED THEATER - LOBBY - NIGHT

The doors swing open violently.

THE OLD MAN, the HERMIT with his aura fading, and GREÑAS cross the threshold.

They walk in with uncertain steps, as if they already know what they'll find.

A field of dust and ashes covers everything. No instruments, no cables, no trace of the band. Only soot, charred

fragments, and silence.

SLOW TRACKING SHOT - They move through the desolate lobby. Their footsteps raise clouds of ash.

At the center of the stage, the only thing left: the BOOK, torn to shreds, as if it had exploded from the inside.

THE OLD MAN kneels.

He picks up the remains with trembling fingers.

CLOSE-UP - HIS HANDS The pages disintegrate at his touch.

SHOT ON FACE - THE OLD MAN Furious. Devastated. He knows they're too late.

THE OLD MAN
(shouting into the void)
LOLAAAAAAAAAAAAA!

The echo fades, unanswered.

The camera slowly rises. Shows THE HERMIT with his gaze lowered. GREÑAS speechless. The ruined theater. The world seems frozen.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAWN

In the Bloody Butcher's van, LOLA's abandoned backpack sits in the front passenger seat. No sign of her.

ARISTÓTELES drives the van, grinning manically. In the back seats, FEDERICO, GUSTAVO, and MANUEL chatter intensely, feeding off each other -- they're not themselves anymore.

FADE TO BLACK

FADE IN

INT. PHONE - TIKTOK SCREEN - DAY

A sequence of TikToks. FEDERICO, wearing huge glasses and a flat-brim cap, offers coins to strangers.

When they take them, he leaves a plastic spider in their hands and laughs when they get scared.

SCREEN: 5.4 million likes.

An unknown finger presses DISLIKE.

FEDERICO pays obese men to parade like carnival ducks while he shoots at them with paintballs.

SCREEN: 8.2 million likes.

DISLIKE.

FEDERICO is a judge at a hula-hoop contest wearing briefs, dress shoes, and long socks between two mustachioed men.

SCREEN: 11.7 million likes.

DISLIKE.

The screen goes black. REVEAL: The viewer is THE OLD MAN.

EXT. STREET - AFTERNOON

THE OLD MAN stops next to a trash can. In his hand: the rusty sign of BAROQUE STUDIO.

He looks at it one last time. Lets it go.

CLANG!

GREÑAS, with short hair and a guitar case on his back, appears behind him.

GREÑAS
Hurry up, OLD MAN we're running late.

THE OLD MAN nods.

They both get into a white van with the logo:||"THE YESTERDAY ROMANTICS"

EXT. WEDDING HALL - NIGHT

SUSANA is in the audience. She hears the first chords of "Can't Take My Eyes Off You."

THE OLD MAN plays without emotion; the singer performs with eyes closed.

SUSANA notices GREÑAS on stage.

Her eyes fill with tears. She runs to him.

GREÑAS sees her, drops the guitar and climbs down immediately.

They embrace tightly.

SUSANA
I thought you were dead or lost!

GREÑAS
I was lost. But you brought me back...

The music continues without him.

THE OLD MAN, in the back, smiles and joins in with new energy.

THE OLD MAN
(from behind the drums, sings the chorus of "Can't Take My Eyes Off You" with feeling -- no microphone)
I love you baby...

EXT. WEDDING HALL STEPS - NIGHT

GREÑAS and SUSANA sit with cups of punch, watching the lights go out.

GREÑAS
Remember when I taught you the intro to "Wish You Were Here"?

SUSANA
Yeah... and you cried when we played it together.

GREÑAS
I was faking... but I did cry a little.

They laugh quietly. Silence. The background music fades away.

INT. OLD MAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dark. Silent.

THE OLD MAN lies in bed, surrounded by cables, pedals...

He swipes through his phone, old photos of him with his former bands.

Scroll. PHOTO. Scroll. PHOTO. Scroll.

The studio cat--the same one THE BLOODY BUTCHER had taken--climbs onto his chest.

CAT
Meow.

THE OLD MAN doesn't take his eyes off the phone.

THE OLD MAN
(sighs, without looking)
Yeah... I know.

FADE OUT